

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE



**Jared Huffman**

ASSEMBLYMEMBER, 6<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

**CHAIR,** Water Parks and  
Wildlife

## **COMMITTEES**

Natural Resources  
Utilities & Commerce  
Assembly Budget Committee  
Subcommittee No. 3 on  
Resources

## **STATE CAPITOL**

Room 3120  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 319-2006  
FAX (916) 319-2106

## **DISTRICT OFFICE**

3501 Civic Center Drive  
Suite 412  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
(415) 479-4920  
FAX (415) 479-2123

<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a06>

July 30, 2010

Karl Pistel, Chair  
Susan Hackwood, Executive Director  
California Council on Science and Technology  
1130 K Street, Suite 280  
Sacramento, CA 95814-3965

Dear Chair Pistel and Ms. Hackwood:

I am writing to request a study by the California Council on Science and Technology in response to the many concerns and questions that have been raised by constituents in my Assembly District including the Marin County Board of Supervisors, City of Sebastopol, City of Fairfax, and Marin Association of Realtors relating to potential negative health effects from SmartMeters, the electronic monitoring devices that Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is installing statewide to continuously measure the electricity output from each household and business.

SmartMeters are currently being installed throughout the state under the authority of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) pursuant to a series of decisions that span from 2006 through 2009. The authority for PG&E to deploy SmartMeters in its territory is embodied in two decisions: D.06-07-027 (the initial deployment) and D.09-03-026 (the upgrade). On the question of health effects of radiation from the devices, PG&E and CPUC maintain that electromagnetic fields emitted from these SmartMeters and the radio frequency power associated with the wireless radios fall within the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) regulations, pointing out that SmartMeters emit fewer radio frequencies than the amount allowable for cellular telephones, microwave ovens, and wireless Internet Services.

Critics claim, among other things, that FCC standards are not sufficiently protective of public health and do not take into account the cumulative effect of radiation exposure from a growing number of sources and devices, including continuous exposure from some sources. For example, they cite a letter from the Radiation Protection Division of the Environmental Protection Agency (attached), they argue, "...these standards were thermally based and do not apply to chronic, nonthermal exposure situations, ... and that ... the current exposure guidelines are based on the effects resulting from whole-body heating, not exposure of and effect on critical organs including the brain and the eyes." Therefore, they argue the "safety" standards were not designed to protect the public from health problems under the circumstances which the meters are being used.

Letter to Karl Pistel and Susan Hackwood  
July 30, 2010  
Page 2

An independent, science-based study by the California Council on Science and Technology would help policy makers and the general public resolve the debate over whether SmartMeters present a significant risk of adverse health effects. Toward that end, I request that the Council specifically determine whether FCC standards for SmartMeters are sufficiently protective of public health taking into account current exposure levels to radiofrequency and electromagnetic fields, and further to assess whether additional technology specific standards are needed for SmartMeters and other devices that are commonly found in and around homes, to ensure adequate protection from adverse health effects.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this important and time-sensitive request. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance going forward

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared Huffman", with a stylized flourish at the end.

**JARED HUFFMAN**  
Assemblymember, 6<sup>th</sup> District